

BETHLEHEM STEEL COMPANY SHIPYARD,  
SOUTH WAREHOUSE  
(W. & A. Fletcher Company)  
1201-1321 Hudson Street  
City of Hoboken  
Hudson County  
New Jersey

HAER No. NJ-95-C

HAER  
NJ  
9-HOBO,  
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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD  
National Park Service  
Northeast Region  
Philadelphia Support Office  
U.S. Custom House  
200 Chestnut Street  
Philadelphia, P.A. 19106

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# HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD.

## BETHLEHEM STEEL COMPANY SHIPYARD, SOUTH WAREHOUSE - (W. & A. Fletcher Company) HAER No. NJ-95-C

Location: 1201-1321 Hudson Street  
City of Hoboken  
Hudson County, New Jersey

UTM: 18.582400.4511450  
Quad: Weehawken, N.J.-N.Y., 1:24,000

Dates of Construction: c. 1908; 1943

Present Owner: Shipyard Associates, L.P.  
5 Marine View Plaza, Suite 500  
Hoboken, New Jersey 07030

Present Use: Vacant

Significance: The South Warehouse is sited within the southern section of the Bethlehem Steel Company Shipyard complex. This structure was built adjacent to the W. & A. Fletcher Company shipyard circa 1908. It remained in use as a warehouse until 1943, at which time it was purchased by the Bethlehem Steel Company to allow for the expansion of the yard. A substantial program of alterations to the building followed, and the South Warehouse provided office, shop, and storage space until the closing of the yard in 1984.

Project Information: The South Warehouse is to be demolished as part of the planned redevelopment of the property.

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### History of the Bethlehem Steel Company Shipyard South Warehouse

The South Warehouse was built immediately to the south of the W. & A. Fletcher Company shipyard circa 1908, and in the following year this structure was shown to be occupied by the American Warehouse & Trading Company (see G.M. Hopkins Company map of 1909 in Overview Section). As originally constructed this large warehouse included a large 9-story main block with a low-lying, single-story section (since removed) attached to the rear. By the time of the First World War this facility was being utilized by the Nungesser-Dickinson Seed Company as a seed warehouse (see Photograph of Love map of 1919, G.M. Hopkins Company map of 1923, and Photograph of Cross map of 1925 in Overview Section). During the Depression the building was occupied by the Brookhattan Terminal Warehouse Corporation (see G.M. Hopkins Company map of 1934 in Overview Section) and by the Hoboken Dock Company (see Sanborn Map Company map of 1906 [Corrected to 1938] and Photograph of Hoboken Yard General Plan Prior to Lease by Bethlehem Steel Co. in 1938 map of 1945 in Overview Section).

In 1943 the Bethlehem Steel Company Shipbuilding Division purchased this property as part of a planned expansion of their Hoboken Yard. It was at this point that the 9-story section of the building came to be known as the South Warehouse, and a program of alterations designed to adapt this structure to a variety of new uses was commenced immediately (see Photograph of Sanborn Map Company map of 1944 in Overview Section). The ground floor, which had previously been dedicated solely to the handling of material to be stored on the floors above, was adapted to allow this use to continue and to provide space for a mess hall. The floors above, formerly used solely as open storage areas, were also altered as the building was converted to serve not only as a warehouse, but additionally as office and shop space. The alterations on the upper floors included the installation of partitioning and the removal of floors to create two-story work spaces. In 1970 the South Warehouse was still serving the yard in a variety of capacities as it housed the mess hall, the plant engineer's office, the small motor shop, training facilities, and storage areas for machine and electrical parts (see Photograph of Hoboken Yard South Warehouse Floor Plans of 1970 and Photograph of Hoboken Yard South Warehouse Ninth Floor Plan and Roof Plan and Sections of 1970). The building continued to house these facilities until the closing of the yard in 1984 (see Photograph of Hoboken Yard General Plan map of 1983 in Overview Section).

Description of the Bethlehem Steel Company Shipyard South Warehouse

The South Warehouse is a 9-story (plus basement) brick structure located just to the southeast of the Machine Shop. This building is 10 bays wide at the east and west elevations and 6 bays wide at the north and south, and it is capped by a flat roof. Stair towers erected in 1943 are located on the north and west elevations, occupying the eastern two bays at the north and the southern three bays at the west. The building is rectangular in plan, measuring 100 feet by 50 feet, and reaches an impressive height of 111 feet. At the west elevation the tall first story is capped by corbelled brickwork which is continued at the north and south elevations (see Photograph). The openings on this floor include one intact loading bay (which is fronted by a concrete loading dock), three altered former loading bays (two are now doors, with one covered by the stair tower, while the third is a double window), one former door at the north end (now a window), and a bricked window at the south end within the stair tower. The ghost of a former 3-story stair tower (removed in 1943) is visible at the north end of this facade. The windows above the first floor are 1/1 sash with concrete lintels and sills. A significant exception to this is seen in the windows of the ninth floor, which exhibit arched brick lintels. The 10-story stair tower on this elevation is accessed by a single door, and all windows (in the two northern bays) have segmental arched brick lintels and concrete sills.

The first floor of the north elevation is occupied by three former rail freight loading bays (two are now doors, while the other is a double window) (see Photograph). The windows above are paired and exhibit a profile similar to those in the west elevation -- 1/1 sash with concrete lintels and sills on the second through the eighth floors and brick-arched lintels on the ninth floor. The 9-story stair tower on this facade is served by a door in its west wall and a single row of windows in the eastern bay of the north wall that match the windows seen in the west stair tower. At the east (rear) elevation the ghost of the demolished rear wing and the openings that formerly provided access to it dominate on the first floor (see Photograph). The floors above include three large, sealed door openings per floor, with the central door associated with the 10-story tall elevator shaft. These doors, most of which now include small, more recently installed window openings, were apparently put in place in anticipation of a possible vertical expansion of the rear wing. The south elevation remains unchanged from the time of its original construction (see Photograph). It exhibits three intact former rail freight loading bays at the first floor level and window openings mirroring those seen on the north facade above.

The interior of the South Warehouse still reflects a number of the various activities housed within the building during the tenure of the Bethlehem Steel Company. A portion of the first floor was still in use as a loading area, while the former mess hall was more recently converted to office space. The plant engineer's office and the small motor shop, the latter occupying an

enlarged two-story space (see Photograph), were still located on the second floor. The third floor had continued as storage space, although the former training area was more recently converted to office space (see Photograph). The fourth floor remained a two-story storage area (see Photograph), while the floors above continued as single-story storage areas (see Photograph). This structure's masonry walls support a heavy timber framing system that has, in some instances, been strengthened through concrete reinforcement.

Sources of Information/Bibliography

Engineering Drawings

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